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1 to 26 June 1998 (part I)

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas **Schlesinger** (Austria)

Addendum

Programme questions

Proposed revision to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 24. Management and central support services

1. At its 15th meeting, on 12 June 1998, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 24, Management and central support services.

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 24 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. The view was expressed that emphasis should be placed on management in the proposed revisions to programme 24. The view was expressed that the nomenclature of the Secretariat was an internal matter and should not have been reflected in the proposed revision to the medium-term plan. Doubts were expressed on the proposed revision of the title of the programme from "Administrative services" to "Management and central support services". It was pointed out that public administration was an important aspect of public policy and that, therefore, administration should be undertaken in conjunction with management. On that basis, the view was expressed that the current title of Department of Administration and Management should be retained. The view was expressed that for an intergovernmental organization like the United Nations, the administration is central to its

98-18270 (E) 250698

effective and efficient functioning and, therefore, there was no reason to change the name of the Department of Administration and Management to the Department of Management. It was stated that the Department of Management is the nomenclature normally used in the private sector, and that it was dangerous to view the United Nations from the lenses of a corporate company. There were concerns expressed as to which department would now be responsible for administration. The view was expressed that there was need to review the decision in the future to rename the department. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the proposed revisions accurately reflected the provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 and that the new structure of the programme, as well as the Department, would contribute to better management in the Organization.

4. In connection with the proposed revision contained in paragraphs 24.2 and 24.7, it was stressed that the Secretariat, in seeking to achieve the objectives of the programme, should ensure that those objectives were achieved according to the guidelines established by the General Assembly and resolutions of legislative bodies and on the basis of existing rules and regulations. Accordingly, the related references should be added after each of the proposals.

5. The view was expressed that support should be given to the proposed new paragraph 24.5. The view was expressed that the delegation of authority of operational functions to programme managers would ensure that programme managers would have overall responsibility for the activities under their responsibility. It was emphasized, however, that such delegation should be accompanied by clear accountability; otherwise, compliance to General Assembly resolutions and existing rules and regulations would be endangered. The view was expressed that performance indicators, as well as the related follow-up actions, were important.

6. The view was expressed that the mandate for the establishment of the Management Policy Committee was questionable. Queries were also raised about how management reform would be carried out evenly across the Secretariat. It was expressed, in that context, that Secretariat reform should be fully in accordance with the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

7. The view was expressed that the establishment of an Oversight Support Unit in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management was important. Some doubts were expressed, however, as to whether the location of the Unit should be in the Department of Management or in the Office of the Secretary-General.

8. In connection with the proposed revisions to paragraph 24.8 (new paragraph 24.12), it was pointed out that the proposed new paragraph 24.12 (b) reflected a major deviation from the approved medium-term plan, since the proposed revision would empower the Department of Management to decide on any appeal by staff members against an administrative decision or against disciplinary action, instead of the existing arrangement whereby it advises the Secretary-General on those matters. The view was expressed that the existing text of the medium-term plan as approved by the General Assembly should be maintained.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the approval of the proposed revisions to programme 24, Management and central support services, subject to the following modifications:

(a) *Replace* the first sentence of paragraph 24. 2 with the following:

"The Secretariat seeks to achieve those objectives, with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly, by:"

(b) In the first sentence of new paragraph 24.7, *after* cost-effectiveness *insert* and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly thereon;

(c) In new paragraph 24.8 (c), *after* communications and *insert* transparent;

(d) In paragraph 24.8 (d), *replace* lead *with* develop and at the end of the sentence *add* with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly;

(e) At the end of paragraph 24.8 (g), *add* with full respect for the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

(f) *Retain* the existing text of subparagraph 24.8 (b) in the approved medium-term plan instead of the proposed new paragraph 24.12 (b).

10. The Committee also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the revisions to programme 24 be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

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Addendum

Programme questions

Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 26. Disarmament

1. At its 16th and 17th meetings, on 15 June 1998, the Committee considered proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. It had before it proposals in respect of programme 26, Disarmament.

2. The Deputy Director of the Department for Disarmament Affairs introduced programme 26 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. The importance of the programme was emphasized and support was expressed for the re-establishment of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. In view of the important role that the Department would play in the promotion of international peace and security, regret was expressed that the proposed revisions to programme 26 contained only minimal changes. The view was expressed that the Department for Disarmament Affairs had been established to respond more effectively to the priorities of the Member States in various aspects of the area of disarmament and that, therefore, the new Department should be fully prepared to react to the wishes of Member States. Views were expressed that attention should be drawn to recent developments in the international arena related to the questions of nuclear non-proliferation and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament, which might require the Department to devote even greater attention to its work in that field.

98-18258 (E) 250698

4. Appreciation was expressed for the role of the regional centres in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and on the emphasis placed by the Department on the important role that those centres were likely to take on in the area of disarmament.

5. It was pointed out that the mandate of the Department was contained in General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997. At this stage, there was no need to change the mandate of the Department. The view was expressed that the report of the Secretary-General (A/52/303) referred to in General Assembly resolution 52/220 did not accurately reflect the existing structure of the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

6. Views were expressed that the activities currently undertaken under programme 26, Disarmament, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/39 B of 9 December 1997 should be transferred to programme 1, Political affairs.

7. Concern was expressed about the emphasis placed on the issues of small arms and light weapons and on the proposed assistance to affected States in the consolidation of peace through "practical" disarmament measures. The view was expressed that the assistance referred to would be in the area of small arms and that the increasing importance placed on small arms and light weapons should not be at the expense of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Queries were raised as to how it was decided whether a disarmament measure was practical or not. The view was expressed that there was no mandate for the narrative proposed in paragraph 26.5 of the revisions. Others welcomed and supported the concepts expressed in the proposed revision. The view was expressed that the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reaffirmed the need to carry out the systematic and progressive efforts towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It was emphasized that priorities could not be revised if no agreement was reached among Member States. In this connection the view was expressed that the elimination of nuclear weapons was the first priority for the United Nations in the field of disarmament, in accordance with the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, of 1978, which had the consensus of the Member States of the Organization.

8. On the proposed revisions to existing paragraph 26.5, which have been incorporated into the new paragraph 26.6, objections were raised as to the inclusion, in the third sentence of the paragraph, of the phrase "in particular on issues commanding political consensus among Member States".

9. On the legislative mandates of the programme, attention was drawn to the selective interpretation by the Secretariat of the mandates of the programme, in particular by making references to parts of General Assembly resolution 52/38 of 9 December 1997, instead of including the entire resolution. The need to read resolutions in a comprehensive way was emphasized and the Secretariat was requested to ensure a more objective and transparent rendering of those resolutions. Objections were raised to the proposed deletion of references to General Assembly resolutions 2992 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 entitled Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, and resolution 50/76 of 12 December 1995, entitled Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, since those resolutions provided important mandates for the programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee recommended approval of the proposed revisions to programme 26 of the medium-term plan, subject to the following modifications:

(a) *Delete* the revisions to paragraphs 26.4, 26.5 and 26.6;

(b) Under Legislative mandates:

(i) ***Retain*** General Assembly resolutions 2992 (XXVII) and 50/76, proposed for deletion;

(ii) Under "***Replace*** the following resolutions", ***for*** 37/99, 46/36 and 50/70 with 52/38 ***read*** 37/99, 42/45, 46/36 and 50/70 with 52/38;

(iii) Under "***Replace*** the following resolutions" ***delete*** 42/45 with 52/38 D;

(iv) Under "***Add*** the following resolutions", ***delete*** the references to the following parts of General Assembly resolution 52/38:

52/38 A	Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction
52/38 B and R	Transparency in armaments
52/38 C	Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them
52/38 G	Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures
52/38 J	Small arms
52/38 S	Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia

(v) Under "***Add*** the following resolutions" ***insert***

52/220, annex III	Changes to be made in the programme narrative contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "United Nations reform: measures and proposals"

11. The Committee further recommended that existing paragraph 26.2 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996, should be revised by adding, after the word "support", the phrase "at Geneva and substantive secretariat support at Headquarters".